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WAR IS A BORE



Lieut. Edward Jerome Vogeler

A. S. M. A.

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WAR IS A BORE

and Other Poems

BY
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CONTENTS

	PAGE
TO A JIMMIE PIPE.....	9
ZE SPANGLED STAR BANNER.....	11
A PAWN.....	12
THE NOON-DAY SHOT.....	13
THE "LIFER".....	15
WAR IS A BORE.....	17
ROYAL INDIGESTION.....	20
"CONTACT"	21
THE INDIGESTIBLE YANK.....	23
A MATCH, SIR.....	25
CHILI CON CARNE.....	26
DIVINE RIGHT.....	28
LOVE OF STRIFE.....	30

To a Jimmie Pipe

Gi' us a bit o' makin's, bunkie,
I ain't no steady mooch;
I'm just a poor blokie from Brooklyn,
And my nerves are on the hootch.

It's very onfrequent I smoke 'em,
But what am I gonna do, boy?
I just lost my boozum companion,
My amber-stemmed calabash joy.

I got it from blue-eyed Minnie,
Who works at the pipe store La Salle;
How she got it was none of my business,
But she was a regular gal.

She gimme it the day I enlisted,
She looked a bit guilty and shy;
"Lil sumpin' to tak' along, Buddie," says she,
And her eyes, partner, wuz not dry.

It's two years now that I smoked it,
On hikes and on transports and such.
You asks maybe I don't miss it?
And I answers, no, maybe not much.

The stem was pure yeller amber,
And the bowl was fit for a king,
Wi' a comely and handsome nude lady
A sittin' all carved on the thing.

And after I smoked it a year, pal,
It turned a brownish pink red;
'Twas such a bootiful thing, pal,
I most wanted to take it to bed.

The crust in the bowl was like pie crust,
And the smoke that it gave was so sweet
That, blown in the coffee at mess-time,
Made a regular Delmonico treat.

Well, last night, when doing the trenches
At Devil's Lane Post Number Three,
I thought I'd light up the old hod,
When a Boche took a pop right at me.

He missed me, the dirty, low Tootin',
The misguided, low-mannered snake;
But oh my beautiful joy bowl,
Plum dead center; and say, did it break?

I finally found the pieces,
But left them where they lay;
But I'll find the Hun that shot that gun
If it takes till Judgment Day.

Ze Spangled Star Banner

Voila, Voila, Chere Madelaine,
Open quick up ze window pane;
Do you hear not ze sweet refrain
 Of "Ze Spangled Star Banner"?

Ah, here come zey, ze brave Sammy,
For true Frenchmen toujours les amis.
My heart he beat lak hell, dammy,
 At "Ze Spangled Star Banner"!

Open quick ze door, Ma Chere Petite,
Give zem ze truly Frenchman's treat;
Dance strong wiz all ze little feet
 To "Ze Spangled Star Banner."

Oh, zat's no good, ze step's too long;
If my left leg she was not gone,
I show zem dance how to right not wrong,
 To "Ze Spangled Star Banner."

Oh come, anyhow, and dance him wiz me,
Wan leg, she's enough; oh, say can you see
Une pied comme ca, une pied comme ci,
 To "Ze Spangled Star Banner."

A Pawn

You are just a pawn in a great big game,
A mighty small pawn in a mighty big game,
But without the pawn there'd be no game,
So play your part.

You are just one of a million others,
But all depends on you and your brothers,
So forget yourself and think of the mothers—
Who play their part.

If you should be called in this great big game
To give your life or come home lame,
Without reward or glory or fame—
Why, play your part.

For when pay-day comes you'll get your due,
And, paid in full, you'll start out new,
For the Great Paymaster is always true—
When you play your part.

The Noon-Day Shot

Do you get that hunkie with the square head—
butcher cut?

Well, that's top-kicker Corgan, a sure 'nuff
tough mutt;

He's been thru this war without barking a
limb,

And they do say there's no hurting of him.

He's got the Poor Lemereet and enough Cradi-
guerres

To deal 'em out to the boys in pairs;

And he's fit wherever the fightin' was fast,

And always comes in whole at the last.

This settin' in a trench just makes him sick,

'Cause he's gotta be where the fightin's thick;

So he's gonna leave at noon today

To boost the Fourth Libby Loan in the U. S. A.

Ah! see him shift his cud and drag his heel;

That means he's gonna give us a spiel;

Pay attention or he might get sore

And boot you thru the dugout door;

"You'se guys gather up and get this stuff,
I'm going back home and gonna treat 'em
rough;

I'll make 'em dig down and then cough up
Enuff dried green froghides to choke a pup.

I'll make the slackers sneak and slink,
I'll make the old guys frown and think;
Mothers and sisters will weep and bawl;
Deaf mutes and pacifists will hear my call.

I'll make the Johnnies hock their souls,
And the chinchy misers empty their bowls;
For, when it comes to chewin' the fat,
Casey H. Corgan takes the hat.

But before I go—just take this down,
I'll make another Hun taste brown.
So, Nick, get your roasting fork,
I'm sending down some more fat pork.

Ah—two fingers, I got him there;
Now watch—a bullet whistled thru the air;
But 'twas a Hun bullet that found its way
To Corgan's heart that last noon-day.

“The Lifer”

If you, as I, had spent six years in prison cell,
And breathed each night the scent of all the
 smells of hell;

If you, as I, could see for each crime confined
Thousands like unto thee, maybe you'd change
 your mind.

If you, as I, should wear an ancient prison suit,
With scalp close shaved, quite bare, and man-
 acled to boot,

Then you, as I, would seem a creature low and
 vile—

A nightmare of a dream, the apogee of guile.

If you, as I, could feel the human spark within
The lifer's mute appeal, the victim of one sin,
Then you, as I, might know the horrors of the
 night,

The misery of the blow—the life without a
 light.

But you will never suffer the pains of the trans-
gressor,
Your life will ne'er be rougher for the feeble,
sick confessor;
And the two-inch path you tread will lead you
on forlorn
To join your soul long dead, and there'll be no
one to mourn.



But the Wahr Is a Bawr, Don't Ye Know

I'm Reginald Cooper Aberday,
Of Middlesex County and R. F. A.,
And I've done me bit in me time, I'd say;
But wahr's a bawr, don't ye know?

I knew that the 'Un were itching for fight,
And I knew of Hengland's dizzy plight;
So when it stawted I henlisted that night,
Tho wahr's a bawr, don't ye know.

'Twas first at the battle of Verdun
Where we were outnumbered nine to one,
But even so, 'twas 'ardly fun;
For wahr's a bawr, don't ye know?

We chawged an 'ill of No Man's Land,
Where bullets camouflaged the sand,
And I lost me right heye and me left 'and;
But wahr's a bawr, don't ye know?

We soon 'ad the beggars on the run,
For there's no stuff in the bloody 'Un;
And I took eight thousand boches and a machine gun;
But wahr's a bawr, don't ye know?

'Twas next at the battle of Ypres,
On a dirty, mirky, beastly day,
I was a bit wounded, and there I lay;
But wahr's a bawr, don't ye know?

Altho quite unnecessary to my story,
I decided to take inventory,
And found both legs gone and me 'ead quite gory;
But wahr's a bawr, don't ye know?

You may fawney I was a bit distressed
To see them advawncing over the crest,
For I really rawther needed rest,
And wahr's a bawr, don't ye know.

But I braced meself as best I could
And clevahly fashioned splints of wood,
And chased them back to Melancourt;
But wahr's a bawr, don't ye know?

Whether one or two million, I've forgot,
But I remembered that my tempah was so
deuced hot
That I slew the whole dizzy blawsted lot;
But wahr's a bawr, don't ye know?

It required two trains to carry away
The trophies which I collected that day
Of German 'elmets and such; but I say
Wahr's a bawr, don't ye know.

If you should chawnce upon my 'ome in Regent
Square,
You'll find a whiskbroom which I 'ave there
Of the Kaiser's whiskers and 'Indenburg's 'air;
But wahr's a bawr, don't ye know?



Royal Indigestion

The Kink puffed at his cigarette
And glanced at the report.
“How many thousand men,” asked he,
“Will it cost to take the fort?”

The General bent to bended knee,
And thus he thus replied:
“At the last attack, your Majesty,
But sixty thousand died.”

“’Tis well,” nodded the potentate,
And yawned a royal yawn.
“I must to bed, it is quite late;
Let the attack begin at dawn.”

The battle raged—’twas badly staged;
Men died—the die was cast;
The fight was lost at awful cost—
Upset the Kink’s breakfast.

“Contact”

My wind is up, I will admit,
The bloody Boche have got my grit;
I'm all in and I want to go
Back home on ninety years furlough.

I am the last of only three
Of the Pierre Peyton Escadrille;
There's only Franz and Jean and me,
And Franz is lame and Jean can't see;
And I am sick as sick can be—
Of war and all its story.

It's not the fight that gets my stuff,
Altho God knows I've had enough;
But I come from stock that's hard and tough;
It's not the clamor of the guns,
Or bocherie of the Huns;
For when you cast to do your bit,
You soon get used to it.

It's Mother Earth, the bloody wench,
Who's sweet enough upon her bench;
But should you chance to leave her lot,
She may forgive and she may not.
Of all the fickle females, she
Is the last for me.

I've seen them fall in her graces,
With broken limbs and shattered faces;
Her bitter cruelty knows no bounds
For jilted lovers; and a thousand mounds,
Like eruptions on her stinking breast,
Hold those who one by one have fallen—
And I'm done.

My wind is up, I want to leave
And go away where I can breathe,
And eat and rest and sleep,
And dance and sing and leap
For joy at all that Nature holds—
As new born boy.

My wind is up—what's that you say,
The Boche are sighted on the way?
Contact—contact! you clown, make haste!
That we may give them one more taste
Of Kultur and all its horror;
We'll think of home tomorrow.

“The Indigestible Yank”

I'm in the clinque, I'm on the brinque of vague
and weird disaster;
The floors are charred, the doors are barred,
the walls are alabaster;
But why should I sit up and cry, and worry
how they treat me;
For they may boot, or even shoot, but they surely
cannot eat me.

I'm on the verge, in O. D. serge, of clammy
calamity;
Do not mistake, I do not quake nor clamor
after pity;
For they may curse or take my purse, and may-
be even beat me;
But one great thing, now hear me sing—they
certainly cannot eat me.

The thin roof leaks, the drear hall reeks with
low and loathsome odors.

Outside the bars I hear the cars and the pur-
ring of the motors;

But let them sweat, and let them threat, and
hustle to defeat me—

The one great thought that counts for aught—
they surely cannot eat me.



A Match, Sir

Sir, the captain sir, of the Fifth sir, extinds his
complimints,

And sends me sir, to see sir, if ye've a match
within yer pants.

Says he sir, to me sir, in a manner military,
Go fetch a light ye lummoX, and go fetch it in
a hurry.

Says I sir, to he sir, as befit a 'listed man,
Thank ye sir, if you please sir, I'll fetch it soon
as I can.

Then he sir, gives me sir, with a military grin,
A high kick sir, in a place sir, where the O. D.'s
gotten thin.

Chili Con Carne

In San Antonio, on Calle Alamo,

Don Jose Fernandez, friend of Huerta,
Sells Mexican Habas with tender cordero
To hombres with hambre with lofty disdain.

For wise is Don Jose, and well knows that
gringos

With mucho dinero know not what to eat;
Huevos for breakfast, unspeakable heces,
Cafe con leche and poisonous meat.

Patatas comido and boiled coliflores,
And sopa and jamon and arroz galores;
Aesthetic Don Jose, with mucho dolores,
Shudders and shivers and computes the bill.

But when a Castilian true cavallero
Enters the salon, demands bill of faro,
Don Jose Fernandez leaps from his chair
And stands all attention, eager to serve.

Don Michael Patricio, direct from Kilarney,
Desires a large bowl of Chili Con Carne;
Wants it damn pronto and none of your blar-
ney—

Joy fills the soul of the friend of Huerta.

Chili Con Carne, Mexican treat,
Rattlesnake giblets and tarantula feet;
Copious pimenta to add to the heat,
For the crude cavallero.

Cacti Vinagre, rich ensalada,
The senor is thirsty—a pitcher of aqua
Full of alkali, will serve for cerveza,
Which gringos with madness refuse to allow.

Don Michael Patricio, his hunger voracious,
Seizes the Chili, jaws dripping rapacious,
Splutters and stutters in manner pugnacious,
Addresses Don Jose.

“You misbegotten heathen Mexican snake,
May you and your kind the good saints forsake,
And a million divils feast at your wake—
On your Chili Con Carne.

Divine Right

Say, Jim—you ignoramus a-settin' there,
With your head caved in,
With your feet cocked up,
And your arm in a sling—
Do you know what started
This whole damn show?
What killed them women and children, too,
And put Europe syrup and ketchup in the stew,
And sent t' hell millions like me and you,
And left us in this sorry plight?
Divine Right, Jim, Divine Right.

Say, don't set there so dumb, a starin' at me
With them blinkin' eyes what cannot see;
I never done it; I'm only tellin' ye
Of this God damn fight
What sent t' hell millions before they wuz due,
And overcrowded the joint with such as you,
And left on earth comf'table a very damn few—
But a billion widders and orphings without a
a bite?
Why, Divine Right, Jim, Divine Right.

Aw, say something—say something, ye doty
gink,

And if you can't talk, why try to think.
Ye set there lookin' like the missin' link,
While I'm trying to put ye right
To the reason why and the wherefore of
The Big C. O. in Headquarters Above
Robbed me of me legs and you of yer sight
Thru Divine Right, Jim, Divine Right.

Aw no, no, Jim, don't take me wrong,
I didn't mean to go that strong;
Jest have patience and it won't be long
'Till I'm thru my spiel.
But believe me, if I really thought
That truly 'twas Divine Right that brought
This woe and stress and frightful blight
Upon the earth—why,
I'd start a revolution of my own—
To kick Jove off his Gilded Throne.

The Love of Strife

This life's all a struggle,
Said some silly gray-whiskered old bore,
But the people eagerly listened—
They took it and asked for more.

For whoever's so stupid and simple
For the people to understand,
Is thought a great wise philosopher
And heralded o'er the land.

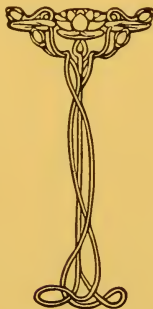
But 'tis true, life's all a battle,
Till death from the day of our birth;
We fight for our milk and honey,
We fight to reduce our girth.

We fight for the filthy lucre,
We fight for the women we love;
We fight for votes for women,
We fight for the Great Above.

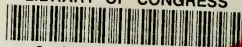
We fight against sickness and trouble,
We fight against poverty and debt;
We fight against strong temptations,
They're fighting in Europe yet.

But the battle of all the ages
Shall start when the war shall cease,
And a terrible conflict surely—
The fight for UNIVERSAL PEACE.

[THE END.]



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